PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION
ON THE
ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

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APR 23

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C., 20530

Dear Mr. Hoover:

I enclose two copies of the transcript of the testimony of Mr. Carlos Bringuier which was taken in New Orleans by Mr. Wesley J. Liebeler of our staff on April 8, 1964. Mr. Bringuier's testimony raises several questions which appear to require further investigation. Mr. Liebeler discussed some of those questions on April 9, 1964, with Mr. Maynor, Special Agent in Charge of your New Orleans office, and has also mentioned some of them to Mr. Malley.

We also have several other questions concerning the New Orleans phase of the investigation of the assassination. These questions, along with those raised by Mr. Bringuier's testimony, are set forth below:

1. Beginning at line 16 of page 40 of his transcript, Bringuier testified that Orestes Pena had told him that sometime during the summer of 1963 Pena had seen Lee Harvey Oswald in the Havana Bar in the company of a man who Pena thought was either Mexican or Cuban. That subject is covered on page 43 of the report of Special Agent Reynolds, dated December 6, 1963, at New Orleans.

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Oswald was also allegedly seen in the Havana Bar by Mr. Evaristo Rodriguez, 1239 Chartres Street, New Orleans, as is reflected on page 48 of the report of Special Agent Reynolds, dated December 30, 1963, at New Orleans.

Bringuier testified that the brother of the owner of the Havana Bar (Rodriguez, apparently) had told Bringuier that, apparently sometime prior to August 15, 1963, the FBI had shown an interest in locating the Mexican who was allegedly seen with Oswald. This alleged interest of the FBI does not appear to have been related to Oswald in any way.

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According to Bringuier, an FBI agent had been in the Havana Bar and told Rodriguez (and possibly Pena) that if he saw this Mexican he should call the FBI immediately because the Mexican "was a pro-Communist." Bringuier said that Rodriguez then saw the Mexican in the company of another Mexican for whom the FBI was also supposedly looking, and had come to him and asked him to call the FBI. Bringuier says that he did so sometime between August 15 and 30, 1963.

No mention of those allegations is made in any of the above reports, or in the report of the interview with Bringuier which is set forth at page 696 of Special Agent De Brueys' report dated December 2, 1963, at Dallas, Texas.

Would you please conduct further investigation to check Mr. Bringuier's testimony on the above points and, if possible, to identify the person or persons who were allegedly with Oswald in the Havana Bar.

In connection with that investigation, you might wish to obtain from Mr. Bringuier a copy of the letter to which he refers at the bottom of page 43 and the top of page 44 of his transcript.

2. Bringuier refers on page 9 of his transcript, and again at page 33 et seq., to an anti-Castro military training camp which had been established in the New Orleans area, apparently in the late summer of 1963. Bringuier suggests a connection between Oswald and pro-Castro individuals because Oswald attempted to infiltrate Bringuier's organization to assist in giving military training to anti-Castro Cubans at a time when such training was allegedly being given in the New Orleans area, but at a time when such alleged fact was not publicly known. Bringuier suggests that Oswald could only know of the camp, if he did, as a result of information supplied by pro-Castro agents who had apparently infiltrated the anti-Castro training camp.

We would appreciate your advice on whether or not a training camp such as that described by Bringuier was ever set up in the New Orleans area.

We would like to have copies of the newspaper articles to which Bringuier refers on page 33 of his transcript, together with translations of the same into English and any information which you may have in your files, or can readily obtain, concerning Mr. Fernandez, or the letter he is purported to have written to Mr. La Chuga and the alleged interception thereof.

We would also like to have your assurance that you have conducted a thorough investigation into the question of possible contacts between Lee Harvey Oswald and any representative of or known sympathizer with the Castro government of Cuba, together with an indication of the result of that investigation.

3. At pages 45-47, Bringuier testified about a magazine article which reported Fidel Castro as having committed a lapsus linguae in a speech given at the University of Havana on November 27, 1963. Castro was reported to have said, under the influence of cognac, "The first time Oswald was in Cuba . . . ."

We would appreciate it if you would determine through appropriate sources whether or not Castro made a speech at the University of Havana on November 27, 1963, and whether or not he made the remarks set forth above.

If you could provide us with a copy of Bohemia International magazine for February 2, 1964, together with a translation into English of the article indicated in Bringuier's testimony, it would be very much appreciated.

4. We note that reports of interviews of Dean Andrews, Esq., are set forth at pages 20-36 of Special Agent John J. Reynolds' report dated December 6, 1963, at New Orleans, and at pages 195-196, 198, 230, 234-235, and 305-306 of Special Agent Warren C. De Brueys' report of December 2, 1963, at Dallas. Mr. Andrews has also been interviewed by the Secret Service.

We note also that Mr. Andrews states that Lee Harvey Oswald came to his office on several occasions during the summer of 1963 and was accompanied by several different people, including a person of Mexican extraction. Andrews also states that he received a telephone call from one Clay Bertrand, asking that Andrews represent Oswald in his defense of the charges placed against him in Dallas. The most recent report (page 33 of Reynolds' report of December 6, 1963) indicates that Andrews had concluded that the above call was a figment of his imagination.

Mr. Andrews now states that he met Clay Bertrand in the street subsequent to the date of such report but was unable to detain him long enough to bring him to the FBI office. Mr. Liebeler has previously advised Mr. Maynor of the above.

Consideration should be given to the possibility that the Mexican alleged to have accompanied Oswald to Andrews' office may be the same man with whom Oswald was allegedly seen in the Havana Bar. If you are able to identify the Mexican or Mexicans seen by the owner of the Havana Bar or by his brother (and this should be possible if the statements of the latter as to their previous contact by the FBI in respect to the Mexicans are correct), Andrews should be asked whether he is able to identify either of such Mexicans as the person who was with Oswald when Oswald came into Andrews' office.

We realize that Andrews has indicated that he would not be able to identify the Mexican who was with Oswald, but in that connection we wish to call to your attention the reports of the Secret Service Special Agents Gerretts, Counts, and Rice, dated December 6, 1963 (Secret Service Control No. 467), in which Andrews does not seem to demonstrate this inability.

We will probably wish to examine Mr. Andrews after you have conducted the investigation requested in this letter.

5. Consideration should also be given to the possibility that the Mexican or Mexicans who may have been associated with Oswald, if the stories of Rodriguez and Pena are correct, may have been involved in the distribution of FPCC literature on August 16, 1963. We note that at least one of the individuals who was so engaged has not yet been identified.

Your continued cooperation in the work of this Commission is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

J. Lee Rankin

J. Lee Rankin
General Counsel

Enclosures
2 Transcripts